

Cognitive, communicative, and cultural sensitivity competencies of future teachers in relation to textual mediation for adult immigrants

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Abstract. Due to the social circumstances leading to increased professional demand, it is necessary to provide more specialized training to initial teacher education students so they can address textual mediation for L2-learning adult immigrants. This research aims to understand how students in education perceive the impact of textual mediation on certain critical skills following a teaching intervention. There are few previous studies on textual mediation in the field of applied linguistics. A qualitative methodology evaluated an intervention involving 103 education students in focus groups. The results reveal that educational mediation with adult immigrants enhances oral and written communication skills, translation ability, note-taking, and creative text analysis. Linguistic adaptation and expanded cultural awareness are crucial in this process. As a practical application, the research underscores the importance of fostering cognitive, communicative, and cultural awareness competencies in initial teacher education students for effective language instruction to adult immigrants.

Keywords: *adult immigrants, analysis, communication, critical skills, textual mediation, translation, synthesis.*

Пенья-Акунья Беатрис. Когнітивні, комунікативні та культурно-чутливі компетенції майбутніх учителів щодо текстової медіації для дорослих іммігрантів.

Анотація. У зв'язку з соціальними обставинами, що призводять до зростання професійного попиту, необхідно забезпечити більш спеціалізовану підготовку студентів початкової педагогічної освіти, щоб вони могли працювати з дорослими іммігрантами, які вивчають англійську мову як другу іноземну, використовуючи засоби текстової медіації. Це дослідження має за мету з'ясувати, як студенти сприймають вплив використання текстів на розвиток певних критично важливих навичок після проведення педагогічного втручання. Існує небагато попередніх досліджень на тему текстової медіації в галузі прикладної лінгвістики. За допомогою якісного методу було оцінено втручання, в якому взяло участь 103 студенти-педагоги у фокус-групах. Результати свідчать, що освітня медіація у роботі з дорослими іммігрантами покращує навички усного та писемного спілкування, перекладу, конспектування та творчого аналізу текстів. Мовна адаптація та розширення культурної обізнаності мають вирішальне значення в цьому процесі. Практичне застосування дослідження полягає в тому, що воно підкреслює важливість розвитку когнітивних, комунікативних і культурних компетенцій у студентів початкової педагогічної освіти для ефективного викладання мови дорослим іммігрантам.

Ключові слова: *дорослі іммігранти, аналіз, комунікація, критичні навички, текстова медіація, переклад, синтез.*

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Introduction

In adult language learning, textual mediation competencies emerge as essential for effective integration into diverse social and professional contexts. These skills range from reading comprehension to textual production, including text synthesis, critical analysis, translation and paraphrasing, and interaction and negotiation of meanings (Heggernes, 2021; Council of Europe, 2020; García-Benito, 2019). This is why language teaching aimed at adults should prioritize the development of these competencies, promoting strategies and activities that reinforce effective language practice in a variety of communicative situations (Schrijvers et al., 2019; Gasca, 2018). This approach not only enhances fluency and accuracy in the target language but also empowers learners to successfully navigate different areas of life.

Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the perception of future educators regarding the importance of textual mediation in teaching Spanish to adult immigrants (García-Balsas & Planelles, 2023), highlighting how these pedagogical practices can enhance the communicative and cognitive competencies of teachers in training, emphasizing the need to integrate these skills into their preparation to facilitate the linguistic and cultural integration of immigrants.

Textual Synthesis

The ability to synthesise texts constitutes a fundamental cognitive process, involving the amalgamation of information from various sources to produce concise and coherent summaries. To carry out this process effectively, the simultaneous use of reading and writing skills is imperative to integrate information from source texts, connecting ideas and arguments among them (Nikbakht & Miller, 2023; Crossley et al., 2023).

In the context of using text synthesis as a tool in learning a new language, organising information logically and systematically is crucial, as it not only involves the ability to establish connections between different ideas and present them coherently (Vandermeulen et al., 2020) but also develops working memory by temporarily retaining relevant information during the synthesis process (Tarchi & Mason, 2023), enabling vocabulary (Authors, 2022) and grammar retention. It is necessary to note that text synthesis requires analytical skills to break down the text into its essential components and then effectively reconstruct it in the final summary (Santos et al., 2021). In certain cases, synthesis may require a creative approach to express information more concisely without sacrificing its meaning (Crossley et al., 2023).

Text Translation

Within the context of textual mediation, translation extends beyond mere word conversion from one language to another (Guerrero et al., 2022); it emerges as a

complex process that transcends mere linguistic transcription to become a reflective and adaptive activity, essential for understanding and cultural relevance of texts in diverse contexts (Mendizábal de la Cruz, 2022; Pintado, 2021; Michienzi, 2023). Used as a mediation tool, translation stands out for its ability to address comprehension issues by reworking and simplifying essential information, adapting texts to the needs of a diverse audience without specialized knowledge (Al-Sofi & Abouabdulqader, 2020).

In this practice, translation is not confined solely to changing words from one language to another (referred to as interlingual translation) but also encompasses adaptation between different forms or styles of the same language (known as intralingual translation) (Michienzi, 2023), highlighting the importance for educators to be flexible and capable of adjusting to different contexts when engaging in textual mediation (Serrano, 2023). The bidirectional capacity (Jiménez et al., 2023) or restructuring of texts while maintaining their cohesion and logic is crucial to ensure that adult immigrants learning other languages can comprehend and actively participate.

Note-taking Skills

The effectiveness of note-taking in the academic context, especially for students learning in a second language, is a complex area of study that underscores the importance of multifaceted skills, as it involves language comprehension, identification and organization of main ideas versus secondary ones, and the ability to synthesize and rephrase ideas rather than reproduce words verbatim (Sefer & Benzer, 2022).

This skill not only facilitates comprehension and retention of information but also supports the organization of thought, promotes student autonomy by enabling them to record and review information independently, as well as strengthening information organization skills, increasing student attention, and verifying listening comprehension in another language (León & Casar, 2022; Siegel, 2023), fostering more self-directed and meaningful learning. In this context, León and Casar (2022) underscore educators' duty in second language instruction to foster note-taking techniques, aiming to enhance students' simultaneous listening and writing skills, vital for tackling more complex tasks.

Analyzing and Critiquing Texts

The development of skills for analysing and critiquing texts in a second language is fundamental for learning and fluency in that language, as fully comprehending the content of the text, identifying key concepts, and understanding the argumentative structure, students enhance their overall language comprehension and ability to process information in that linguistic context (Jackson, 2020; Bobkina & Dominguez, 2019).

Analytical skills enable them to break down the text into its essential components, aiding students in becoming familiar with grammar, vocabulary, and language structure (Prado-Huarcaya & Escalante-López, 2020; Muhammad, 2020). Additionally, critically evaluating the quality of information, the logic of the argument, and the coherence of the text contributes to more reflective and profound thinking in the second language (Mohammed & Naeem, 2021). Synthesising information from diverse sources (Fernández & Fonseca, 2022) also strengthens the ability to integrate and apply linguistic knowledge effectively. Lastly, clear and effective written expression in the second language reflects a solid understanding of the language and the ability to communicate ideas coherently and persuasively.

The research questions we posed were as follows:

1. How does educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect students' ability in education to summarise and explain texts orally or in sign language?
2. How does educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect students' ability in education to translate orally or in sign language?
3. How does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect students' ability in education to summarise and explain texts in writing?
4. How does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect students' ability in education to take notes (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)?
5. How does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect students' ability in education to analyse and critique creative texts (including literary ones)?

Methodology

A qualitative approach and focus group discussions were employed as they allow for an in-depth understanding of textual mediation and critical skills in education students, offering detailed and contextual perspectives to inform educational practice. Manual qualitative analysis was conducted, where an expert outlined responses to each question, cross-checked by another expert, followed by categorical text analysis.

The original version of the manuscript is in Spanish. ChatGPT has been used for proofreading purposes of the English version.

The study involves education students from a university located in southern Spain during the academic year 2022-2023. Specifically, the sample (n=130) comprises 2 groups of initial teacher education students: one referred to as I (Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education, second year) and the other as P (Bachelor's in Primary Education, third year). The sample is homogeneous in terms of study disciplines and age distribution.

Regarding gender distribution, out of the total sample (n=130), 102 individuals (78.46%) are female, while 28 (21.54%) are male. When categorised by groups, within the Early Childhood Education cohort, females constitute the majority with

64 participants (96.97%) compared to only two male participants (3.03%). In the Primary Education group, females still predominate, albeit to a lesser extent, with 38 participants (59.38%) compared to 26 males (40.62%). Regarding age, the average age of the student sample is 20.10, with a standard deviation of 3.45, indicating an age range between 19 and 27 years.

Procedure and Materials

An innovative intervention was conducted among initial teacher education students. An intervention in textual mediation was designed, requiring initial teacher education students to adapt the planning and execution of an activity aimed at an adult immigrant. Additionally, the perception of the intervention was evaluated after the sample experienced it through focus groups, a qualitative method tool.

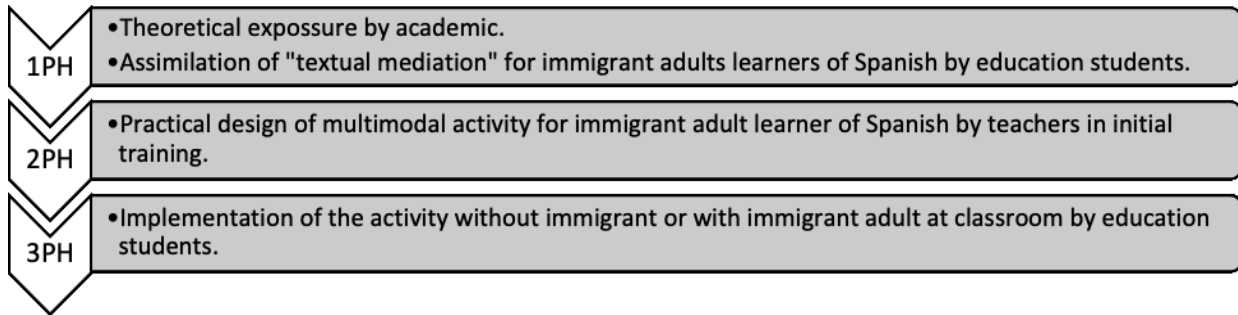
The source on which this study based its textual mediation discussion group questions is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2020). Previously, there was a previous document from the Council of Europe (2018) also titled Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The university teaching intervention consisted of the following stages, as described in Figure 1. The intervention took place over 6 weeks. Firstly, students from both groups received and understood the theoretical part of textual mediation for immigrants. Secondly, the two groups of students, organized into teams, designed a multimodal activity aimed at learning Spanish as an additional language by an immigrant from a specific nationality. In this way, they explored historical and cultural aspects of immigrants. Thirdly, in the Early Childhood Education student group, this activity was theoretically scheduled, without being applied with a real immigrant. However, in the Primary Education student group, it was scheduled for them to invite an adult immigrant to carry out the activity practically.

This second scheduling differs in that it adds an experiential learning approach according to the paradigms of Dewey (1963) and Piaget (1977), both recognised in the pedagogical context. Both emphasise the importance of practical and active experience in the learning process. Dewey, in particular, emphasises learning as a dynamic and interactive process that occurs through action and reflection. Piaget, on the other hand, focuses on the individual's cognitive development and how it is constructed through interaction with the environment and problem-solving. Both theorists significantly influenced contemporary education by highlighting the importance of direct experience and experimentation in meaningful learning. Therefore, Primary Education university students faced the challenge of seeking and inviting an adult immigrant of the chosen nationality, interacting with them, and guiding them in learning Spanish through this activity in front of the teacher and their peers.

Fourthly, additionally, in the same week the intervention ended, the two groups of students, organised into discussion groups of 6 to 8 students, responded to the four qualitative questions.

Figure 1
Phases of Teaching Intervention



Results

In the realm of academic research, qualitative analysis plays a pivotal role in identifying and understanding the complex dynamics inherent in educational mediation with adult immigrants. Hence, the establishment of categories and subcategories becomes necessary to access a robust conceptual framework, enabling systematic organization of collected data and facilitating the identification of patterns, trends, and significant relationships.

In this context, categories and subcategories were determined to highlight how educational mediation activities affected participants in recognising the critical competencies involved in textual mediation aimed at adult immigrant students.

Thus, for the first question: *In what ways does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect or not affect your ability to summarise and explain texts orally or in sign language?* the most noteworthy categories about impact on the ability to summarise and explain texts orally or in sign language from both groups are as follows:

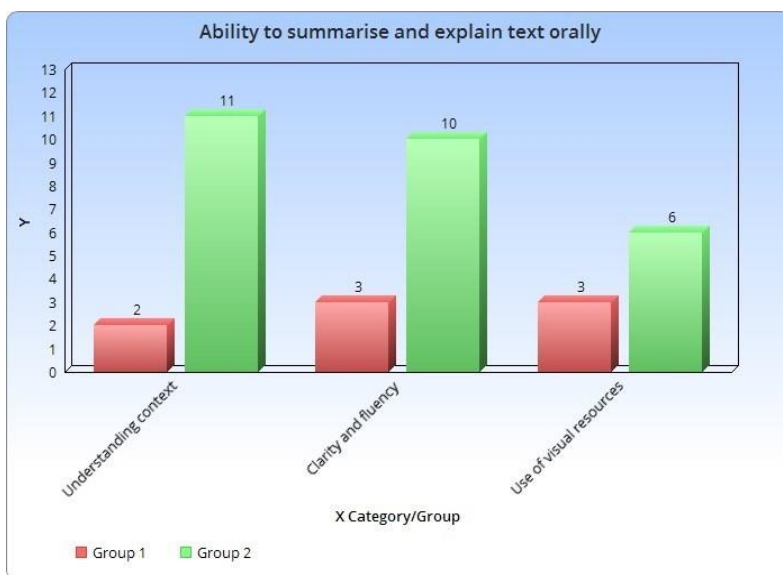
- Development of skills for selecting relevant information.
- Importance of oral and sign language communication.
- Learning summary and explanation techniques.
- Improvement in reading comprehension and speed.
- Need for language adaptation to the receiver.
- Use of visual aids and signs to facilitate understanding.
- Importance of vocabulary and grammar.
- Focus on empathy and active listening.
- Significance of communication in social integration.
- Use of summaries as a study technique.
- Patience and clarity in explanation for immigrant understanding.
- Enhancement in adaptability and educational communication skills.

Below are the highlighted categories along with their respective frequencies:

Table 1
Ability to Summarise and Explain Texts Orally

Category	Group P	Group I
Understanding context	2	11
Clarity and fluency	3	10
Use of visual resources	3	6

Figure 1
Ability to Summarise and Explain Text Orally



Participants from both groups indicated that the activity positively impacts their ability to summarise and explain; however, this sentiment was predominantly expressed in Group I. This suggests that the theoretical possibility of working with adult immigrants in an educational context enhances their communication skills, understanding, and adaptation according to the interlocutor's level.

Regarding the second question: *In what ways does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect or not affect your ability to translate orally or in sign language?*

The following categories are considered relevant about positive impact on oral or in sign language translation ability:

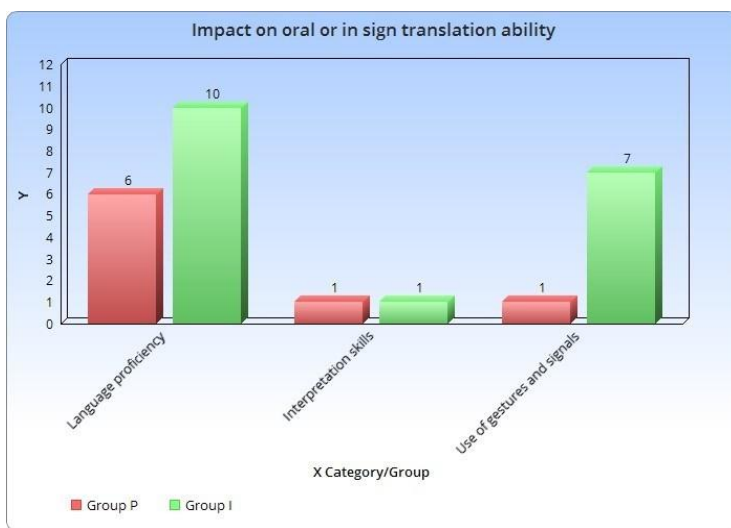
- Improvement in oral translation skills.
- Development of signed translation (gestures) capability.
- Increase in vocabulary and language skills.
- Adaptation of communication to linguistic and cultural needs.

Among these, the following categories stand out, accompanied by their respective frequencies:

Table 2
Impact on Oral or in Sign Translation Ability

Category	Group P	Group I
Language proficiency	6	10
Interpretation skills	1	11
Use of gestures and signals	1	7

Figure 2
Impact on oral or in sign translation ability



It is evident that educational mediation activity has a positive impact on the translation ability of the participants, both orally and in sign language. This is evidenced in the responses from both groups, with Group I placing greater emphasis on this. It is pertinent to note that participants from Group P highlight direct contact with the immigrant as a key factor in this process, as it compels them to adapt linguistically and culturally, resulting in significant development of their communication skills.

For the third question under analysis: *In what ways does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect or not affect your ability to summarise and explain texts in writing?*

The categories related to impact of ability to summarise and explain text in writing are apparent:

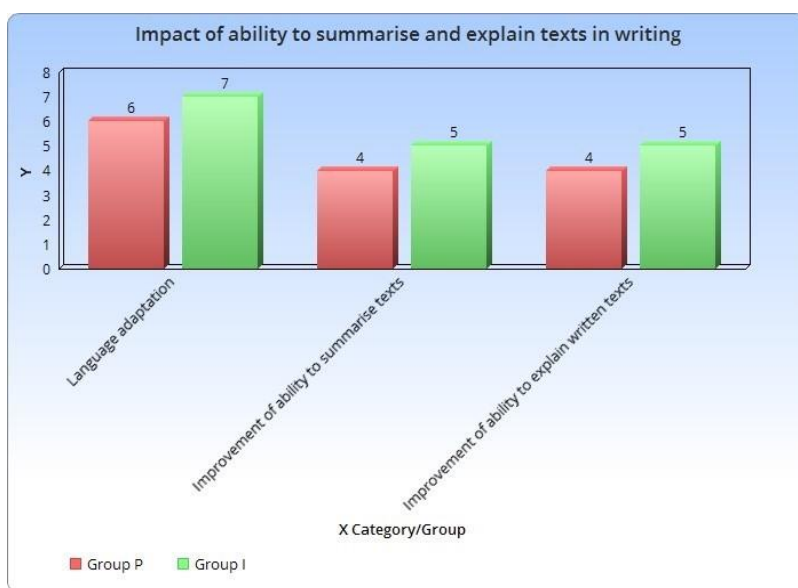
- Adaptation of texts according to the language level and comprehension of the immigrant.
- Use of clear and simple language when explaining texts in writing.
- Need to simplify vocabulary and sentence structures.

The following categories stand out, each with its corresponding frequency:

Table 3
Impact of Ability to Summarise and Explain Texts in Writing

Category	Group P	Group I
Language adaptation	6	7
Improvement of ability to summarise texts	4	5
Improvement of ability to explain written texts	4	5

Figure 3
Impact of Ability to Summarise and Explain Texts in Writing



Both groups recognise the importance of adapting language to the level of understanding of the adult immigrant. The ability to summarise texts and explain them in simple language suggests a shared awareness of the need to adjust communication to ensure adequate comprehension.

Regarding the fourth question: *In what ways does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect or not affect your ability to take notes (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)?*

The categories pertaining to the ability to take notes become visible:

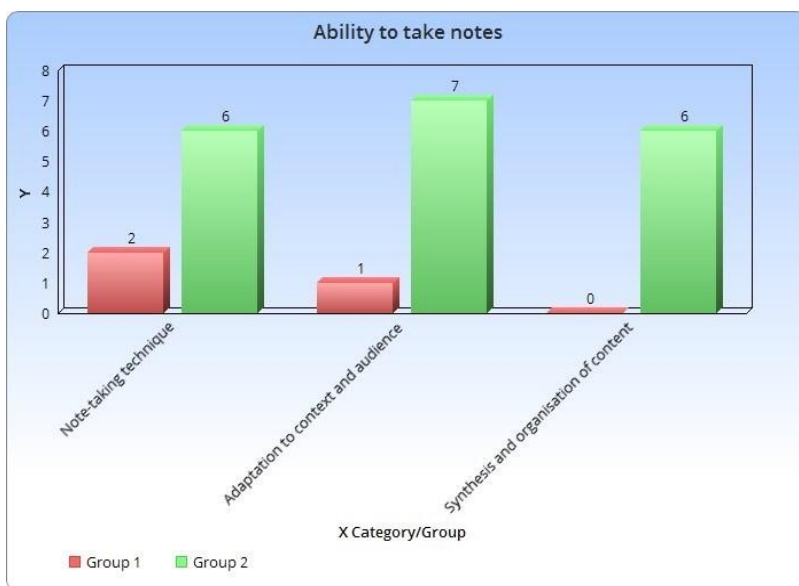
- Use of simple and structured language
- Use of visual tools (headings, examples, colours, mind maps)
- Adaptation to the immigrant's level of comprehension
- Improvement in attention and retention of information
- Importance of note-taking for comprehension and subsequent analysis

The following categories stand out among these, along with their respective frequencies:

Table 4
Ability to Take Notes

Category	Group P	Group I
Improvement in note-taking technique	2	6
Adaptation to context and audience	1	7
Synthesis and organisation of content	0	6

Figure 4
Ability to Take Notes



Through the activity conducted, Group I emphasises the importance of synthesis and organisation of content as part of the note-taking process during educational mediation, as well as the need to adapt to context and audience to facilitate note-taking by the immigrant. This suggests the development of intercultural skills through the strengthening of an empathetic approach towards the recipient.

Regarding the fifth question: *In what ways does this educational mediation activity with adult immigrants affect or not affect your ability to analyse and critique creative texts (including literary ones)?*

The following categories emerged around the ability to analyse and critique creative texts:

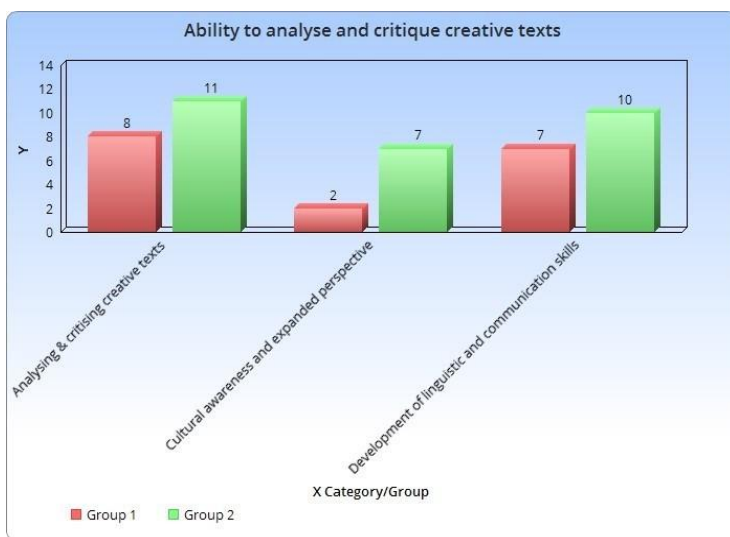
- Considerations regarding language and linguistic skills
- Focus on comprehension and interpretation
- Learning and understanding of social and cultural context
- Reflection on the process of analysis and critique
- Language and grammar learning

The following categories stand out from these, showing their respective frequencies:

Table 5
Ability to Analyse and Critique Creative Texts

Category	Group P	Group I
Improvement of Ability to analyse and critique creative texts	8	11
Cultural awareness and expanded perspective	2	7
Development of linguistic and communication skills	7	10

Figure 5
Ability to Analyse and Critique Creative Texts



Both groups highlight the improvement in these skills as a result of theoretical (Group I) and practical (Group P) interaction with this specific demographic group. Acquisition of new perspectives, broadening of cultural knowledge, and development of critical thinking emerge as key aspects in this enhancement process. Additionally, the importance of adapting creative texts to the needs and abilities of adult immigrants is emphasised, as well as the value of understanding the author's culture for a more comprehensive interpretation of texts. Furthermore, the positive impact on language mastery and promotion of creativity through these educational mediation activities is highlighted.

Discussion

The analysis of the results obtained in the study establishes a significant correlation between the theory presented by various authors and the perceptions of future educators regarding the relevance of educational mediation competencies in teaching a second language to adult immigrants.

Throughout the different activities and with the participation of various future educators, a crucial element in this process is highlighted: the cultural dimension.

Authors such as Sumonte and Fuentealba (2019), Alcaraz (2019), and Rubio and Rubio (2022) argue that the cultural dimension must be considered as an integral part of language teaching, asserting that culture cannot and should not be separated from language learning.

Regarding the relevance of the ability to summarise or synthesise texts to subsequently provide explanations to adult immigrants, study participants expressed that this skill has facilitated the integration of data from various sources, emphasising contributions from Nikbakht and Miller (2023), as well as Crossley et al. (2023).

Participants also recognised several aspects positively affected by this activity, including the development of relevant information selection skills, improvement in reading comprehension and speed (Authors, 2023), and language adaptation to the recipient, which, in the words of author Leal (2020), could be termed conscious linguistic learning. Furthermore, the importance of empathy and active listening, essential for effective communication (Benoit, 2023), was highlighted, along with improvement in adaptability.

Regarding text translation as a mediation tool in the educational context with adult immigrants, participants recognise the need to adapt texts, in line with Al-Sofi and Abouabdulqader (2020) to the particularities and capacities of these individuals. Thus, it is highlighted the role that teachers play in the complex process of teaching a new language (Iglesias & Ramos, 2020), being flexible in adjusting textual mediation to different contexts (Serrano, 2023), to different forms or styles (Michienzi, 2023), or restructuring texts (Jiménez et al., 2023).

Regarding the impact of this activity on translation ability, improvements in oral translation ability, development of signed translation capacity (gestures), increased vocabulary and linguistic skills, and adaptation of communication to linguistic and cultural needs are highlighted. This implies a deep understanding of the cultural relevance of materials in different contexts (García-Collado, 2019), with participants noting direct contact with immigrants as a key factor in this process, as it compels them to adapt linguistically and culturally (Krystallidou & Braun, 2022), resulting in significant development of their communication skills consistent with Darling and Daniels' perspective (2003).

The study highlights note-taking ability as an essential component in educational mediation with adult immigrants, as participants recognise the importance of this skill in facilitating information comprehension and retention, as well as fostering student autonomy (Sefer & Benzer, 2022).

Educators understand their responsibility in driving the development of note-taking techniques to enhance students' ability to listen and write simultaneously in another language, significantly contributing to self-directed and meaningful learning (León and Casar, 2022; Chumaña et al., 2019).

With participants from Group I predominantly emphasising the importance of content synthesis and organisation as part of the note-taking process during educational mediation, as well as the need to adapt to context and audience, it suggests the development of intercultural skills through theoretical strengthening of empathy towards the recipient. This is because, as expressed by García and

Domínguez (2022), note-taking is a highly complex situation, especially for students in the process of developing active listening and have not yet reached a solid level in verbal communication skills or mastery of both common and technical vocabulary.

Regarding text analysis and critique in a second language, findings demonstrate the importance of text analysis and critique in the context of second language learning. According to the conclusions drawn, participants consider these processes fundamental for improving both learning and language fluency. This viewpoint is supported by researchers such as Jackson (2020) and Bobkina and Domínguez (2019), who have argued about the relevance of these activities in developing language skills.

Furthermore, Colomo (2022) highlights that literary text not only contributes to reading comprehension but also involves written expression, grammatical, lexical, pragmatic aspects, and oral comprehension and expression. This perspective emphasises three general objectives in teaching a foreign language through literature: teaching in the foreign language, exploring literature, and immersion in the culture of the country where the second language is spoken. Such an approach not only promotes improved reading comprehension but also enriches vocabulary and cultural knowledge, as argued by Ahmed (2022).

The ability to analyse texts, as pointed out by Colomo (2022), involves breaking down content into essential elements, understanding grammatical structure, and critically evaluating information. As evidenced in the studies, this skill fosters reflective and deep thinking in the second language, facilitating effective communication, particularly with adult immigrants learning the language.

Additionally, González (2021) highlights the close relationship between literature and culture, emphasising the importance of understanding the author's culture for a comprehensive interpretation of texts. In this sense, educational mediation activity with adult immigrants has a positive impact on the ability to analyse and critique creative texts, as well as on the development of cultural awareness and linguistic and communication skills.

Conclusions

The present research has shed light on the critical importance of textual mediation competencies in the field of language teaching for adult immigrants. Through a qualitative analysis of various areas of textual mediation, the study has explored how these competencies impact educators' ability to facilitate effective second language learning in intercultural and diverse contexts, as well as the influences these competencies have had on them at both professional and personal levels.

The study has revealed that text synthesis constitutes a fundamental cognitive process, requiring not only analytical skills to break down and reconstruct information coherently but also logical and structured organisation involving the development of working memory. Furthermore, the importance of text translation has

been highlighted as a reflective and adaptive activity that transcends mere linguistic conversion, demanding educators to be flexible and capable of adapting to different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Note-taking ability has been identified as a multifaceted skill that not only facilitates comprehension and retention of information but also promotes student autonomy and self-directed learning. In this regard, educators play a crucial role in driving the development of note-taking techniques to enhance students' ability to process information in real-time and in a second language.

Moreover, text analysis and critique have emerged as essential skills for learning and fluency in a second language, enhancing overall language comprehension, familiarity with grammar and vocabulary, and fostering reflective and profound thinking. The importance of understanding the author's culture for a comprehensive interpretation of texts has been emphasised, underscoring the need for language teaching that integrates cultural aspects alongside linguistic ones.

The results obtained in this study have highlighted a positive impact on textual mediation competencies, especially in Group I participants, suggesting significant development of educators' communicative and intercultural skills. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating the cultural dimension into language teaching and the need for specific training for educators working with adult immigrants.

As a corollary, it is pertinent to note that the activities developed have been able to strengthen competencies, positively affecting educators' ability to facilitate effective second language learning in intercultural and diverse contexts. These findings have significant implications for educator training and the design of language teaching programs that are culturally sensitive and effective for adult immigrants. Ultimately, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the improvement of the quality of language education and the social integration of adult immigrants in various community and professional settings.

The future research will focus on integrating quantitative research and obtaining a larger sample size to enable both descriptive and inferential analyses. Another intervention could also be conducted and subsequently evaluated using a mixed-methods approach with students from the same university. Alternatively, a comparison could be made between students from different universities in different countries to study the impact of cultural parameters.

Acknowledgments

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